DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 410 SP 027 353

AUTHOR Diniz, Fernando, Ed.; Kropveld, Peter, Ed.
TITLE Teacher Training and Special Education in the Eighties.
INSTITUTION Association for Teacher Education in Europe.
PUB DATE Aug 83
NOTE 67p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; *Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); Interdisciplinary Approach; Parent Participation; *Preservice Teacher Education; Social Influences; *Special Education
IDENTIFIERS *Europe

ABSTRACT

This report presents a comprehensive overview of special education, or education of handicapped children and the preparation of special education teachers in Europe. Perspectives from eight countries are presented: United Kingdom; Netherlands; Federal Republic of Germany; Republic of Ireland; Northern Ireland; Italy; Norway; and Sweden. The first section of the report addresses the changing context of special education and describes how special education in the countries is changing as a reflection of societal developments. The second section identifies current issues in special education, including: integration of special education and regular schools; the role of parents in special education; multidisciplinary cooperation in special education; the relation between special and regular education; and micro-electronics and special education. The third section details how teachers in the different countries are prepared for their work in special education, and the final section explores further developments in teacher training for special education. (CB)

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TEACHER TRAINING AND SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE EIGHTIES

Ed. Fernando Diniz
Peter Kropveld

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TEACHER TRAINING AND SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE EIGHTIES

Fernando DINIZ
Peter KROPVELD

Report prepared for the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE)

Brussels, August 1983

Preface

The present report has been compiled by the working group on "Teacher Training for Special Education" of the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) - one of ten such working groups which the ATEE has established in various specific sectors of teacher education. Membership of the groups is open to all members of the Association, and the groups generally meet both during the Association's annual conferences and between these. Further details of the working groups and of the Association's activities in general are available from the Secretariat on request.

Publication of the present report, which forms part of a project which the group is currently carrying out on the transition of handicapped persons from school to working life, has been facilitated by a generous grant from the Commission of the European Communities, for which the Association wishes to express its thanks. The views expressed in the report are, however, those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Association or the Commission.

Brussels, August 1983

Alan Smith
Secretary- General

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TEACHER TRAINING AND SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE 80s

A PROGRESS REPORT

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Paper compiled by : Fernando Diniz and
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Photographs by Peter Kropveld

December 1982

AN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

1. The ATEE Working Group on "Teacher Training for Special Education"

1.1 The group, formed on the initiative of Joke van Unen and Karl-Josef Kluge, met for the first time at Viersen (Federal Republic of Germany) in May 1981. This initial meeting was a familiarisation exercise in which participants became better acquainted with each other as professionals, learned about the Special Education systems in member countries and addressed themselves to the matter of teacher training in special education. Subsequently the group attended the EEC Conference in Noordwijk, Holland, to mark the International Year of Disabled.

1.2 Prior to the Birmingham Conference the "hard core" membership of the group comprised :
Joke van Unen (Chairperson), Education Inspector, Amsterdam, Marian Appleton (UK), Fernando Diniz (UK), Jan Drapers (Netherlands), Karl-Josef Kluge (Federal Republic of Germany), Peter Kropveld (Netherlands), Desmond Swan (Republic of Ireland) and a new recruit, Anna Arfelli Galli (Italy).

1.3 In the course of the Seventh ATEE Conference held in Birmingham on 6th-10th September 1982, the group met a number of times. A great deal of work was accomplished. The results of its endeavours are also included in this progress report.
Although our "founding father" Karl-Josef Kluge, Desmond Swan, Jan Drapers and Anna Galli could not attend the Birmingham Conference, we nevertheless had fruitful discussions largely due to the participation of new members either on a temporary or permanent basis.

Prof. Leonardo Trisciuzzi from Trieste University, Italy, Hans Alterström, Nörköping University, Sweden, Fayez Mina from Cairo University, Egypt, as well as Paul Murphy from Manchester Polytechnic took part in the discussions as temporary members for the duration of the conference.

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As new permanent members of our group in Birmingham we met Anne-Lise Arnesen from Opplan Regional College, Norway, Eamonn Dwyer from Ulster Polytechnic, Northern Ireland, Marion Major from Nene College, Northampton England, Rex Brinkworth from Birmingham Polytechnic, and Brunetta de Fontana (Trieste University, Italy).Our group now consists of 11 permanent members from seven different countries : the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and Norway. All of our group members are working in key positions in their countries in the field of teacher training for special education, mainly in universities and colleges of higher education.

We therefore feel that from our discussions up to now, in Viersen, Maastricht and Birmingham, we have managed to draw up a fairly comprehensive overview of the situation of special education, or education for handicapped children in the seven countries with particular reference to teacher training in this field.

The following framework for the report was developed during the Maastricht meeting (29th-31st January 1982) and adopted in Birmingham in September 1982.

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A. The Changing Context of Special Education

In this section we will describe how special education in the different European countries is changing, reflecting developments in society.

B. Current Issues in Special Education

The following issues were identified as essential for the situation in many countries :

a. Integration of special education in regular schools
b. The role of parents in special education
c. Multidisciplinary co-operation in special education
d. The relation between special and regular education
e. Micro-Electronics and special education.

C. Teacher Training for Special Education

In this section we describe how teachers in the different European countries are prepared for their work in special education. The paragraphs describing the situation in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom were drafted in Maastricht.
We also describe the "special education element" in general teacher training. There was broad consensus that teacher training for special education can best be organized as in-service training for experienced general teachers.

D. Further Developments in Teacher Training for Special Education

It is clear, that there "should" be a strong link between the current issues on the one hand, and new developments in teacher training on the other. We have attempted to explore whether this has also been the case in reality in the different countries.

We are aware that this report is not comprehensive in its coverage of the four areas identified; it is, however, designed as a general overview of special education and teacher training for special education and will form the basis for a more detailed study which will eventually include a bibliography.

The Working Group intends to embark on the second phase of its study, in which it will concentrate on more specific topics. The first issue will be "From school to adult life". The aim is to examine how teachers in the various countries are trained to prepare handicapped children for an active adult life.

We hope that you will read this report with as much interest and pleasure as we have had in writing it. Above all, we hope that it will make a small contribution to building a better future for all handicapped children and young adults.

Fernando Diniz, London, England

Peter Kropveld, Hilversum, Holland

November - December 1982

SECTION 1

THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom

Netherlands

The Republic of Ireland

Northern Ireland

Italy

Norway

United Kingdom

Fernando Diniz

In 1974 the UK government set up a committee of enquiry with the following terms of reference : "to review educational provision for children and young people handicapped by disabilities of body and mind, taking account of the medical aspects of their needs, together with arrangements to prepare them for entry into employment : to consider and to make recommendations".

The Committee reported in 1978 (The Warnock Report) and its recommendations were widely supported by those concerned with the handicapped. The Government has recently introduced legislation (The Education Act, 1981) which is planned to come into force in the autumn of 1982.

Three priorities were identified by the committee : provision for pre-school children, teacher training and provision after the compulsory school period.

While there is disappointment that the Act neglects these three main priorities, the government has accepted the Committee's concept of Special Educational Need and in particular its recommendations on integration.

Special Education is broadly defined as encompassing "the whole range and variety of additional help, wherever it is provided and whether on a full or part-time basis, by which children may be helped to overcome educational difficulties however caused. It thus embraces education help for children with emotional or behavioural disorders who have previously been regarded as disruptive, as well as for children who have hitherto been seen as requiring remedial, rather than special education" (DES, 1978, p. 45).

It is anticipated that up to one pupil in five will require special provision at some time during its educational career. As the Report pointed out, a teacher of a mixed-ability class of thirty pupils (such as may be found in normal schools) should be aware that "possibly as many as six of them may require some form of special education at some time ... and about four or five ... at any given time" (ibid. p. 41). It was thus recommended that this group of children (and young people) should be included in future references to "Children with Special Needs".

The main implication of this broader definition of special education is that it will require one or more of three main approaches :

I. the provision of special means of access to the curriculum through special equipment,facilities or resources, modification of the physical environment or specialist teaching techniques;

II. the provision of a special or modified curriculum; and

III. particular attention to the social structure and emotional climate in which education takes place (ibid. p. 41).

The Act requires Local Education Authorities to develop their provisions for pupils with special needs, stipulating that, as a general policy, education should be provided in ordinary schools provided the arrangements made"are capable of meeting the (child's) needs, compatible with the efficient education of children with whom he is to be educated and with the efficient use of public resources,and take proper account of the wishes of his parents".

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Netherlands — Jan Drapers

It is increasingly evident in all sectors of society that the handicapped want to put forward their own case without the mediation of others. The parents of handicapped children are becoming increasingly organised. Dutch education policy should support their efforts to obtain equality of opportunity and it is thus fitting that education policy should try to cater for their demands.

In the Netherlands particular provision is made in twenty kinds of schools for pupils with special educational needs. These different types of special schools have few mutual functional relations or relations with ordinary schools.

In the early Seventies there was some critical reaction to the separate development of special and mainstream education. Issues involved in this discussion are currently :

- the relative autonomy of the special school system;
- the increasing need for extending special education for learning-disabled and maladjusted children;
- the problem of devising activities to promote a better connection between both (mainstream and special) school systems.

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These considerations are expressed in two objectives :

1. to provide for children with disabilities to be educated in ordinary schools wherever possible, whether or not extra provision is made for them.

2. to provide for children to be educated in separate special schools whenever the needs of the child make it desirable to do so.

In view of the above the policy of educational integration will be developed along two lines in the Netherlands.

The first may be termed the "broadening of brief" and is concerned with widening the scope of the care provided by ordinary schools.

In the future special education will have to be provided not only in separate schools but also in ordinary schools. This will lead to a redefining of the borderline between ordinary and special schools. In consequence of this way of thinking there is a movement towards external integration : integrating learning-disabled, mildly retarded and emotionally disturbed children into ordinary schools. A number of co-operative projects between ordinary and special schools are undertaken to review the situation and determine how best to widen the scope of the care provided in ordinary schools. Nonetheless there will always be children who require special provision which ordinary schools, despite increased facilities, are unable to provide.
The second line is therefore concerned with the gradual transformation of special schools for the children who need this special care into educational establishments in which the orthopedagogical approach predominates in a multi-disciplinary school organisation. In this conception the process of internal integration is all important, implying the integration of e.g. slow-learning maladjusted and delicate children into one special school. The criterion is no longer one of category of handicap but of means, - how best to meet the child's needs. Here, too, projects make a contribution to the new views in special education.

The most important issue in the general development of education in the Netherlands however is the "broadening of brief" of regular education. The ordinary school does have the task of creating such a climate and of

differentiating in such a way that more children can be helped in their own school and fewer referred to special education. It is necessary that there be a fundamental change in the function of the special school :

- the expertise and achievements of special education have to devolve to the regular school;
- special education has to assist the ordinary school in assessing and identifying children educationally-at-risk. This will serve to enhance the prevention capacity of the ordinary school.

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The Republic of Ireland

Desmond Swan

The International Year of the Disabled seems to have given Special Education a boost from which, it is hoped, neither it nor education in general will ever recover. Thus, paradoxically, one outcome of this shot in the arm may well be to hasten the demise of Special Education as a separate element on the educational horizon. It would seem appropriate then for us to use this vantage point to take stock of the overall contribution of the Special Education movement, to ask what has been its impact on formal education in general, and to place in perspective the interaction between ordinary and special education, insofar as the latter is still identifiable as a separate entity. The separation is of course arbitrary and is not to be exaggerated as the former is properly a sub-set of the latter. But since institutionalised special education has had certain influences which seem likely to enrich the rest while too great a separation could result in impoverishment, this exercise in counterpoint would seem important.

This section will therefore be structured as follows :

1. Perspectives from the ordinary school/class teacher
2. Perspectives from the special school/class teacher
3. Barriers between them
4. Currents of influence from each to the other.

It is the chief hypothesis of this paper that Special Education is now succeeding in shifting the balance between the individual on the one hand and the cultural and social determinants of learning on the other, as manifested in schooling. Schools necessarily reward achievers and in so doing they can scarcely avoid penalising those who fail to achieve. Thus far they are elitist or norm-centred. Yet they aim, or purport to aim, at educating all children. To this extent they are egalitarian or child-centred. How to reconcile these two aims is the perennial problem of the educator. (cf. John Dewey, The Child and the Curriculum; School and Society).

Traditional education is based on the group or culture, and the universal demands it makes on the individual. A certain irreducible core of knowledge, skills and attitudes needs therefore to be mastered and shared by each, as the price exacted for future membership of the group. Here the emphasis is on the

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collective, on the mass and on the external determinants of education. This traditional schooling - at any rate above the elementary level - was competitive in its outlook.

No doubt it had its strengths, e.g. by way of insistence on objective standards of excellence, and on the need for each individual to give of his best - though it is clear that it has not always gone the best way about achieving these desirable aims. Again it is a fact that the individual's potential can be developed irrespective of the skills of the culture, or realised in totally idiosyncratic ways. (For instance, can the concept of art be entirely divorced from that of communication, or artistic education be separated totally from the development of personal potentialities?).

On the other hand what is here termed traditional education can be seen to have its shortcomings, varying no doubt in expression and intensity from school to school and from place to place.

First there was the danger of devaluing the individual in reality, despite some insistence on the uniqueness of each one in theory. There was a risk of discrediting or excluding the child whose idiosyncratic learning patterns were out of phase with those of the majority. Individual variations on the human theme that could not be accommodated tended to be devalued, and the one who was different was depersonalised.

In general, since competitiveness and learning came to be closely identified, the group disclaimed responsibility for the individual's problem. Let him measure up or get out. Stupidity and laziness were both taken as branches from the same tree - while achievement was seen as the reward for diligence. As a result the survivors were all too often deprived of the positive social gains from the presence of others who were different from themselves. Now it would be wrong to see Special Educaton as a movement in isolation. It is in fact an outcome as well as a cause : an outcome of the "child-centred" movement, of Humanism, the Enlightment and the Romanticism of earlier centuries, as well as of the impact of scientific and technological modes of thought on education itself in the twentieth century. Nevertheless it is not invalid to treat it as the institutional expression and embodiment of these ways of thinking in our own time, and therefore as something we may tentatively set apart from the rest.

Here the emphasis is essentially on the individual, on accommodating the system, the curriculum, the technology to the varying individual patterns and styles of learning. This is true, theoretically at least, whether the provision be in a special school or special class, or by ways of individualised instruction in the ordinary classroom - though the focus here is still on those who are thought in some way to be failing to achieve.

Clearly, this "institutionalisation of failure" is a two-edged sword. In accepting limitations it is possible to pander to the individual's line of least resistance. In accepting deficits as real in one area it becomes more difficult to convey a notion of external standards of excellence in other areas, which the handicapped individual may well be capable of achieving. Indeed the unique contribution to excellence of many of those who suffer from some kind of deficit would be stifled by an overgeneralisation of the maxim "to know all is to forgive all".

Again the labelling frequently needed for the administrative purpose of releasing funds for special education, too often demands that a corresponding price be exacted in the misguided attitudes of classmates, workmates, or potential employers. Perhaps it has been necessary to institutionalise special education in order ultimately to de-institutionalise it, but de-institutionalising it alone without at the same time educating public attitudes to an informed accommodation of handicapped persons, will be counterproductive.

What then are the strengths of Special Education, however structured and organised? Acceptance of the diversity of persons must rank highly, acceptance not only in a spiritual sense but also by way of curricular provision of pedagogical strategies and interpersonal interaction from day to day. The feeling that love (as <u>agapé</u>) is not conditional upon achievement, the focusing upon individual strengths rather than on weaknesses, and the realisation that everyone needs to be recognised as equal - these must be numbered among the contributions that special education can make or is already making to education in general. In terms of mental health alone, it is well established that a healthy personality can develop only in an environment that is emotionally supportive (or accepting) while at the same time intellectually stimulating. There are, undoubtedly, barriers to free communication between special and ordinary education - attitudinal, geographical and professional barriers - which operate in both directions. These become barriers to communication, to understanding and to education. The unique contribution of special education

will be to inform and enrich the education of all by permeating and eventually obliterating these barriers, thus showing how unnecessary and even harmful they really were.

Special Education in Northern Ireland — Eamonn Dwyer

One of the outcomes of the political and social conditions pertaining in Northern Ireland is a sharply divided community, a division which is clearly seen in the dual system of education which caters separately for the Protestant and Catholic populations. This division is almost complete at primary and secondary levels where "state" schools are for the most part staffed by Protestant teachers and are mainly attended by Protestant children while Catholic "voluntary" schools (now financed almost entirely from state funds) provide a like service for the Catholic community. At third-level education, although the division is not sharply drawn, it is reflected to a great extent in teacher training .

Yet, in spite of this dichotomous system, special education has not gone its separate ways to the same extent. This is due more to historical accident rather than to planning by Government or Church. From the period when Ireland was partitioned just over 60 years ago until around 1947, little education

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provision was made for handicapped children and what did exist was almost entirely outside the education system as such. In 1947 there was a rapid expansion of education in Northern Ireland when an Education Act was introduced in the Northern Ireland parliament giving the province similar provision to that contained in the 1945 Act in England. This resulted in a list of special categories of handicap (physical handicap, educational sub-normality (ESN), hearing impairment, visual impairment, etc and schools were provided accordingly. In the Act, however, universal secondary education was introduced and the Catholic community was therefore faced with a very heavy financial commitment in order to establish a Catholic secondary school system. At that period in history the state only provided partial funding for the building and maintenance of voluntary schools, hence the financial burden placed on the Catholic community was such that special schools were generally beyond its means.

Special ducation provision therefore tended to develop within the "state" school system, generally following the pattern found in England. In this way the "state" special schools were attended by children from both communities, although two Catholic ESN special schools were established in the Belfast area. However, in recent years, this situation has been changing with the growth of units for handicapped children. Each unit is located in, and is an integral part of, a primary or secondary school and because this development is taking place within both the "state" and "voluntary" schools, it is beginning to lead to segregation of handicapped children on religious lines in order to attempt to achieve integration at a social level.

The publication of the Warnock Report in England is now having an impact on Northern Ireland's educational policies and the establishment of the types of units described above has already set the scene for the introduction of an Education Act in 1983 which closely follows the aims and content of the 1981 Education Act in England

The Act will require : (i) that educational need rather than type of handicap determine educational provision; (ii) that parents be directly involved in decisions about assessment and provision; and (iii) that children with special needs be accommodated in "normal" schools where possible.

While it might appear that special education provision in Northern Ireland has followed the English model very closely, there is, however, one major difference.

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This concerns provision for those children who are diagnosed as mentally handicapped (as a very rough guide this would refer to an IQ of less than 50). They are legally deemed to be unsuitable to benefit from education. The children so categorised become the responsibility of the Department of Health and Social Services rather than the Department of Education. Special care schools have been established to cater for mentally handicapped children, and while these schools are staffed by qualified and specially trained teachers and generally operate in a similar manner to other types of special schools, the exclusion of these children from the education system confers a stigma on them.

The reasons for the continuance of this sytem are complex, but one of the main explanations is that parents of those mentally handicapped children approaching school-leaving age become very concerned - and justifiably so - lest their children do not gain entry to adult day centres for the mentally handicapped. This very real possibility arises because of the shortage of places in adult centres and the parents believe that transfer from schools (i.e. Department of Education schools) to adult centres could become highly selective. Under the present system the change-over is generally accomplished with little bother.

However, there is a very strong possibility that the Department of Education will accept responsibility for these children (as happened in England in 1971) in the near future. This decision could be made at any time within the next twelve months and if a transfer of responsibility does occur it will clearly have a considerable impact on the education system in Northern Ireland, particularly in view of the impending legislation on special education.

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Italy

Brunetta de Fontana, Leonardo
Trisciuzzi, Anna Galli
University of Trieste

A Brief Outline of Education for the Handicapped in Italy

1) In Italy it was at the turn of the century that there developed an awareness of the need to make special provision for children with learning difficulties. At that time slow or retarded children were separated from their schoolfellows. Special schools for deaf and blind children were regulated by a law.
2) Shortly before World War I the Montessori method was developed in Italy and soon gained popularity abroad.
3) Between the two world wars special educational facilities were instituted for retarded and subnormal children as well as for disabled children except the deaf and blind, whose education continued to be regulated by a special law.
4) In the Fifties educational policy sought to improve techniques for teaching handicapped children, whatever their disability. In the early 1960s there was a crisis in special education. This was due to massive emigration from Southern Italy to the main industrial cities of the North. These newcomers had a different culture and virtually spoke a different language - a dialect that was found inacceptable by the school teachers. Their way of coping with overcrowded classrooms was to transfer all the children who could not (from the viewpoint of the teachers) be integrated into regular classes, to special education. In 1962 a new education act reorganising the secondary school system was passed by Parliament, an act embodying a new definition of special education need.
5) As a result there was a massive influx of psychologists into the school system. But they did not know what the teachers expected of them. They closed the special classes because they thought that special classes formed children who felt themselves apart - socially and intellectually - from children in mainstream education. The new situation led to the development of new methods of teaching.
6) Because of the increasing awareness that the handicapped as individuals and as pupils constitute not so much a psychological problem as a social one, it was decided that children with disabilities should be educated in ordinary schools wherever feasible. Local Education Authorities provide an additional teacher to assist the ordinary teacher. The support teacher gives personal tuition to meet the needs of the slow-learning and maladjusted children and, generally, of those are unable to learn by themselves. But what the Italian school system requires are teachers prepared to give special teaching and education to children who need it. The task is now to evolve new teaching methods, appropriate both for handicapped and non-handicapped pupils, and train teachers in using them.

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Italy

Anna Galli

The Italian government has implemented a policy of educational integration since the early Sixties.

Whereas in other EEC countries such as Netherlands, discussions about "internal" and "external" integration of special and ordinary education have been going on for more than a decade, with only a few experiments in the classroom, in Italy special education has been reduced to a minimum since 1977. Only the severely handicapped attend special schools. For the less handicapped, special education is provided in ordinary schools. If there are some handicapped children in a normal class, a second teacher can be appointed, who does the work of a remedial teacher.

The Italian system raises a number of interesting questions partly because of a lack of information about the precise nature of policy and practice. For example : How many handicapped children must be enrolled in an ordinary school before a remedial teacher is made available? Is this remedial teacher specially trained? What kind of work is she or he actually doing? Remedial work with the child only, or is she or he also working in tandem with the parents?

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Norway Anne-Lise Arnesen

The debate on the question of integration of the handicapped started in Norway some 15-20 years ago when our educational system was undergoing some basic changes. This was partly due to new demands regarding the content and organization of education as a result of structural changes in society, and to some extent political objectives of equality. The equality aspect was particularly essential, implying that the quantity and quality of education and other services at different levels should be equally distributed, irrespective of socio-economic background, ability or handicap. This ideological emphasis generated a more thorough debate of the conditions of the hnadicapped in a broad perspective, questioning the effects of segregated systems of special schools, socio-medical institutions and special facilities and services established outside the normal services. After lengthy policy discussions an official philosophy emerged, based on the principles of equality and normalisation.

The principle of equality states, at a general level, that people with handicaps are to be recognized as full members of society with the same access to benefits and services and with the same responsibilities and duties as people in general, as far as this is possible.

The principle of normalisation implies that people with handicaps should be able to enjoy patterns and conditions of everyday life as close to the norms and patterns of mainstream society as possible. This means that measures and services have to be instituted and distributed in the environment where each individual lives - and not in special institutions to which the handicapped must move.

This means a change in the concept of handicap (or disability), which in turn requires other approaches and skills on the part of teachers.

The new concept of special education is relativistic, depending on cultural, structural, physical and social conditions as well as on individual (physical or personal) differences.

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SECTION 2

CURRENT ISSUES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom

Netherlands

The Republic of Ireland

Northern Ireland

Italy

Sweden

Section 2 CURRENT ISSUES IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom — Fernando Diniz

Looking forward to the 1980s and 1990s, a number of issues are likely to continue to influence the provision and practice of special education. For practitioners in schools, they mean that greater attention will need to be given to factors outside the immediate school environment. For teacher trainers they demand a greater degree of flexibility both in appraising the needs of schools and in providing courses which have relevance to the classroom situation. Not least of all, both for teachers and trainers, is the issue of ACCOUNTABILITY.

Among those issues currently occupying special educators in the United Kingdom are :

i Integration : The tide of public opinion plus other factors, including the economic crisis in Britain and the drop in the birthrate (falling rolls)have precipitated a re-examination of the role of ordinary and special schools. Fewer schools, re-organisation, the "Curriculum Debate" and more recently the 1981 Education Act mean that the majority of pupils with special needs will be educated in ordinary schools. How will these schools cope? What will be the nature of the remaining special schools? These are no longer issues for debate. They are practical problems which will have to be resolved.

ii Parents : The Taylor and Warnock Reports addressed themselves to the issue of the role of parents in the education of their children. In some sectors of special education (particularly schools for mentally handicapped children) exciting projects have been initiated and evaluated. But for the majority of parents of children with special needs there is little or no contact with schools. Teachers in particular are under increasing pressure to accept parents as equal partners in making decisions about the curriculum most appropriate for their offspring. This requires teachers to have the counselling/interactional skills to be able to deal positively with parents.

iii Multidisciplinary co-operation : Related to the above is the issue of co-operation and co-existence with other professionals (e.g. psychologists, doctors, speech-therapists). Nowhere is this more significant that at the time of the identification/assessment of special needs. At present these

professionals are trained separately and their individual territories defined. Would joint courses of training resolve the problems of inter-professional rivalry? Who would validate such courses? How would the professional organisations react?

iv Preparation for Active Adult Life : The prospect of long-term unemployment of young adults has caused government and professionals alike to re-examine the needs of the 16-19 year olds in particular. Further education, both for personal developent and leisure and not only for career interests, is seen as a priority. The events of 1981, when Britain witnessed riots by black and white youngsters, have forced the government to address itself to the needs of the young. Reports of inquiries abound but there is little evidence of concrete action! Handicapped school-leavers are last in the line of those awaiting the hand-outs. On the positive side, colleges in certain counties have established short courses for such young people, especially the mentally handicapped. These courses are however run by tutors who do not have a qualification in special education.

Netherlands — Peter Kropveld

As in the other EEC countries, particularly the United Kingdom and Italy, there has been much discussion since the early 1970s in the Netherlands on the question of integration.

At that time the Government put up some questions for discussion with particular regard to mildly retarded and mildly handicapped children.

Were they dispatched to special schools overhastily, because the ordinary schools had no possibilities for mainstreaming, for meeting the needs of these children?

Why was it so seldom that children from special schools were returned to ordinary schools?

Why is it that the great majority of mildly retarded and mildly handicapped children are from the lower working classes?

These were some of the most important questions that had to be answered.

What is the situation now?

i. Integration : A few experiments are being conducted just now or, as in Amsterdam, are about to start.
Mostly these concern "international integration" which means that several types of special schools are working together, or better, that a special school wants to meet the needs of several types of handicapped children who are normally sent to different types of special schools. In the discussion surrounding these experiments some well-known Dutch educationalists like Dumont and Van Weelden are warning both the Government and educationalists not to throw away the baby with the bath water. A century of special education has led to a great store of knowledge and practical experience in the education of handicapped children, that could be threatened by overprecipitate integration.

ii. The Parents : From the question raised about too many children from lower-class families being relegated to special education emerged an understanding of the importance-particularly in special education-of working together with the parents.

Although at universities and training colleges everybody acknowledges the importance of working with the parents, it sometimes looks as if more in fact is going on in mainstream schools than in special schools.

Teachers in special schools often feel threatened by "difficult" parents, who contest their way of educating the children.

Here and there experiments in this field are being conducted. If special schools really do try to co-operate with the parents in favour of the child, the positive results are amazing, but only if teachers and parents stand side-by-side in their difficult job and not opposite each other as provider and receiver.

iii. Multidisciplinary co-operation : Here the roles are more or less reversed. In this respect the teacher is sometimes regarded as the receiver, the layman, who gets valuable advice from the academically-trained experts.

This used to be the case in the Fifties and the Sixties, and although it is generally known by all the people involved in special education that experts and teachers should work together, in practice there are still many

problems : e.g. Who is responsible and accountable for the education of the handicapped child, the teacher, the expert (or the parents)?

And even the experts themselves have difficulty on occasion in working together on an equal basis. The doctor often thinks of the social worker as someone who executes her or his plans, whereas the psychologist thinks of the doctor as someone who gives psychological advice without any hard data, apart from a "clinical understanding".

But in those schools where all have overcome these barriers, splendid work is done in mutual co-operation. The problem for the near future will be how to transfer these successful attempts to less successful situations.

iv. Preparation for active adult life : In many schools, ordinary and special, children are still prepared for the next school or for jobs.

Jobs are rare these days. Tens of thousands of young people who have left school in the last few years have not found jobs in Holland. Schools in general have not prepared their pupils for this situation. Some special schools, however, have. In one secondary special school in Haarlem the midly retarded pupils have built their own horse-riding course; their fees are paid by the town council and the parents together. They have also built canoes and are learning how to sail in them. So the children are learning how to spend their leisure time productively and attractively. Sadly, they will probably have all too much leisure time in the future.

Although this is not the only school in Holland that is preparing its pupils for active adult life in these and other ways, it is one of a very small handful.

Many schools, also special schools, are reluctant to look out of the window into society, especially not when it comes to drawing implications for the school-leavers' curriculum.

Here again the task is to disseminate the results of the successful experiments in other schools.

i. A "phenomenological" approach to the pupil

A "phenomenological" point of departure is necessary for the teacher in special education. This means taking the pupil as he finds him, and treating him as a total person. Commonly the learning difficulty encountered by the handicapped pupil will have an emotional dimension - even if it is not emotional in its origin - resulting perhaps in a poor self-image, in negative attitudes towards formal learning in specific areas (e.g. reading or numbers), or even in alienation from school, a "decision to fail". This means that the task of the teacher in special education will frequently be first to relate positively to, and only then to teach,a pupil who has lost confidence in school.

ii. Collaboration with parents

In the first instance this implies that the ordinary class teacher be equipped to detect early indications that a pupil may be developing or may already have acquired a seriously handicapping problem. While the teacher should have acquired such skills in his teacher-training courses, constant active liaison between teachers and parents will also provide vital information.

Besides, the teacher who is engaged in special education must come to realise that he or she can achieve virtually nothing without the active support of the parents, and that their aid must therefore be enlisted in their own child's education from the very beginning. This will often have to depend on an initiative from the teacher, as there are indications from research that some parents of handicapped children are quite reticent about approaching the teacher at all (E. Anderson, 1973); indeed this could be true of most, although it is felt that the higher the social class of the parents, the more effective is parent-teacher co-operation. Both the Taylor and the Warnock reports addressed themselves to the issue of the role of parents in the education of their children. In some sectors of special education, especially forthe mentally handicapped, exciting projects have been initiated and evaluated, although they are still few and far between. However, there is at the same time increasing pressure on teachers to accept parents as equal partners in making decisions about the curriculum for their offspring. This in turn requires that the teacher has acquired the appropriate counselling skills, to be able to deal positively with parents both initially and throughout the pupil's schooling.

iii. Collaboration with fellow teachers and other professionals

Again the teacher in special education cannot afford to work in isolation from fellow teachers or from other professionals associated with these children, viz. psychologists, doctors, speech therapists, physiotherapists. This is particularly important at the time of identification or assessment of special needs, where it is still too frequently the case that the teacher is the last person to be consulted or is accorded only the role of "accessory after-the-fact". Indeed live communication between teachers and the other professionals, especially psychologists and medical practitioners, which is essential to the proper assessment of a pupil's educational needs, can still be non-existent especially in areas where there is no psychological service in the regular school. A seemingly unbridgeable gulf between theory and practice can bedevil special education no less than other areas of education. Among the professionals involved in special education, a hierarchy of priorities often exists with medicine placed at the apex, psychology next in importance and pedagogy third - each functioning with little or no understanding of the others. It has been suggested that joint courses of training for these groups of professionals, or at least a less-than-total compartmentalisation of their several pre-service or in-service training courses, be considered.

Northern Ireland — Eamnon Dwyer

Special education in Northern Ireland is undergoing a period of change. There is clearly a move towards greater integration of handicapped pupils in normal schools. Some serious anomalies have yet to be removed in order to accomplish this aim, particularly in relation to mentally handicapped children whose exclusion from the education system, if it continues, will undermine the good intentions of the planned legislation. The coming months are indeed going to be a crucial period in the development of special educational provision in Northern Ireland.

(1) The higher education institutions which presently exist are Ulster Polytechnic, Queen's University, New University of Ulster, Stranmillis College of Education, St Mary's College of Education (for women) and St Joseph's College of Education (for men). Proposals have been made by the Secretary of State for Education to rationalise the higher education system, particularly as it exists for teacher education. A merger is to take place

between Ulster Polytechnic and New University of Ulster and a new university will be created. The date on which the merger will begin to operate is 1984. An attempt was also made to bring the three colleges of education together on the Stranmillis campus. Although each college would retain its autonomy while resources only would be shaved, the plan has run into fierce opposition from the Catholic hierarchy and has so far not been initiated.

Northern Ireland had its own parliament which was responsible for a wide range of internal affairs of state. Among these was the education system. The parliament was prorogued in 1972 because of the political instability of the province but the various government departments have remained intact and although they are headed by a politician from the Westminster parliament, the administrative structure of the departments operates independently of the Department of Education and Science in London.

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Italy Brunetta de Fontana

The integration of handicapped children in the school system and the reform of compulsory education in Italy : the relevant laws.

To gain a better awareness of the present schooling system in Italy, it seems useful to know the laws regulating the integration of handicapped persons in the school system and the context in which they have been enacted.

It is first necessary, however, to determine who can be defined as handicapped?

Act. N°.118 of 30th March 1971

Translation in law of Decree N°5 of 30th January 1971 and the new rules governing the physically and mentally disabled.

Art. 2

(New regulations and those who are entitled to benefit)

The provisions of Decree N°5 of 30th January 1971 are applicable until 30th April 1971. From 1st May 1971 the rules set forth in the following articles will apply.

This law defines as physically or mentally disabled all those suffering congenital disabilities or disabilities which develop later, including progressive disorders, mental illness depending on oligophrenia of organic or metabolic origin, mental handicap consequent upon sensory and functional impairments, when these reduce permanently the individual's working capacity by at least one-third or - if the subject is under 18 years old - when they render him chronically unable to accomplish the tasks and functions corresponding to his age.

Excluded from these provisions are war-victims, victims of accidents at work, in-service invalids and the blind and deaf for whom other regulations apply.

Art. 3

It is the Republic's duty to remove all economic or social hindrances that, in limiting de facto the freedom and equality of all citizens, prevent their full development and real participation...

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Art. 34

Every child has a right to schooling. Primary education, provided for almost 8 years, is compulsory and free.

Art. 38

Handicapped and disabled people have the right to receive education and vocational training.

The above-mentioned Act. N°.118 introduced some experimental integration of handicapped children into ordinary classes of mainstream educational establishments particularly well qualified for this purpose.

The following Act constitutes, however, the cornerstone of the legislation :

Act N°.517 of 4th August 1977.

Regulations on pupil assessment and on the abolition of remedial exams, as well as on changing the organisation of the school system.

Art. 2

While the unity of every class is maintained, in order to ensure the right to study and the full development of pupils' personality, the educational programme may include integrative activities, organized for groups of pupils of the same class or of different classes, aimed at meeting the individual needs of each pupil. In the context of these activities the school provides means of integrating the handicapped children, making use of specialized teachers assigned, in virtue of Art. 9 of the Republic Presidential Decree N°.970 of 31st October 1975 if enrolled in special lists, or in virtue of The Act N°.820 of 24th September 1971, Art. 1, Paragraph 4. The requisite specialized integration and socio-psycho-pedagogic back-up must be ensured including specific forms of support, within the competence of the State and of local authorities, subject to their financial possibilities and on the basis of the programme prepared by the School District Council (1).

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(1) Parents are entitled to one representative on each Council who is selected each year by vote among themselves.

The Teachers' Council establishes, by the end of the second month of the school year, the plan for the activities set out in paragraph 1 above, on the basis of general criteria proposed by the Class Council and the Interclasses' Councils taking into account,for its implementation, the number of teachers assigned to the educational authority, availability of buildings and environmental considerations. The programme set out above has to be checked from time to time by the same Teachers' Council during the scholastic year.

The Interclasses' Councils have to meet at least every two months to check the overall operation of the teaching activities in the classes within their competence, and propose appropriate adjustments to the teaching programme.

Art. 7

To facilitate the fulfilment of the right to study and the full development of the pupils' personality, the educational programme may include school activities of an interdisciplinary nature organized for groups of pupils from the same class or from different classes, for the purpose of meeting the individual needs of each pupil through differentiated action.

Under present planning, in virtue of the above quoted paragraph, are foreseen integration and supportive arrangements for handicapped pupils, making use of specially qualified permanent teachers or of teachers with indefinite appointment, in-service in the secondary school, who volunteer for this task, within a ceiling of one teacher per class comprising handicapped pupils for a maximum of six hours weekly. The classes including handicapped children can have no more than 20 pupils. In these classes the necessary specialized integration, the socio-psycho-pedagogic facilities and the various forms of special support must be provided by Government and local authorities, within the limits of their financial possibilities and on the basis of the programme prepared by the School District Council.

The activities stipulated under paragraph 1 of the present Article, normally replace ordinary teaching for a maximum of 160 hours within the school year, with particular attention to the initial and final periods of the lessons, according to an integration and support programme prepared by the Teachers' Council on the basis of broad guidelines drawn up by the Council of the educational establishment and of the Class Council's suggestions.

These activities have to be carried out by the class teachers within the time assigned to each subject for each class. The activities foreseen in the last paragraph of Article 3 of Act N.1859 of 31st December 1962, have to be coordinated with the work organized under the terms of Paragraph 5.

The programme as set out above must be checked from time to time and brought up to date by the Teachers' Council in the course of the school year.

The Class Councils, in their periodical meetings in accordance with the Act of 31st December 1962, Art. 2, last paragraph have to check the overall progress of the teaching in the classes under their charge and put forward suggestions as to how the work programme might be improved.

The remedial classes and the special classes established in virtue of Act N°.1859 of 31st December 1962, Arts.11 and 12, are abolished.

Art. 10

The deaf and dumb children pursue their schooling, in accordance with the legislation applying to them, in the appropriate special schools or in the ordinary classes of the public school system, where the necessary specialized integration is assured as well as the support services within the competence of Government and local authorities operating the programme provided by the School District Council.

This educational development is reflected for the first time in the "New Secondary School Programmes", voted on 19th February 1979. The aim of these programmes is to obtain, inside a school totally open to the environment, the greatest improvement of each (and hence every) pupil. Understandably, selection, competition, the custom of assessing the pupil not on his own merits, but on how he performs vis-à-vis others or against an ideal standard of an ideal class are abandoned as unproductive and dangerous. Clearly now in Italy the secondary school has made the greatest strides, but Parliament is currently discussing upper secondary school reform and experts are studying the reorganization of the primary school.

Excerpts from the new secondary school programme.

Part I.
Characteristics and aims of the secondary school

.....

2) Legislative measures

.....

The legislative measures in 1977 develop the educational principle of the 1962 reform, both by imparting more appropriate structures to a school system, whose aim is the human and cultural enhancement of the Italian people, and by doing away with those structures which appear inadequate to meet needs (remedial and the special classes).

General principles and aims of the secondary school

The secondary school, as a compulsory school, follows the democratic principle of improving the education and training of every citizen and of the Italian people as a whole, strengthening their capacities to take part in cultural, civil and social activity and contributing to their development.

The secondary school, in virtue of the Law"contributes to promoting the training of individuals and citizens, in accordance with Constitutional principle and provides for the young people's guidance in choosing their later activities".

d) The secondary school in the context of compulsory education

The secondary school, after the primary school, takes its place inside the global process of educational development, a global process that is brought about through the dynamic continuity of content and methodology within compulsory education : this schooling aims to impart the rudiments of culture and provide the preconditions for lifelong or further education. Such schooling is not aimed at preparing access to the upper secondary school: it is however a prerequisite for any further educational commitment.

4) Structures for family/school collaboration, as set out in Presidential Decree N°.416 of 31st May 1974

Participation structure in the school system not limited to a single interpretation of reality, but effectively open to the ferments and contributions of the outside world allows the secondary school to develop, in its specific way, its educational work, cooperating with families, solliciting their

suggestions about fundamental choices in education : to this end full advantage should be taken of meetings between teachers and parents, afforded by Class Councils, the Establishment Council, parents' assemblies, periodical parent-teacher meetings. Every occasion and structure must be exploited, including the medium of the District Council, under the terms of Delegated Decree N°.476 of 31st May 1976 and later regulations.

5) Teachers' professionalism in the secondary school

A special specific qualification is required for teachers who must be able to make responsable didactic choices in curriculum planning so as to set up a useful educative communication. Given the broadening of responsibilities implied by the Delegated Decree, teachers must be provided with very comprehensive training, not only in the specific cultural field, but in the didactic one too. For these reasons teachers need to update their training - this both by right and by duty - not only to expand their knowledge, but also to develop the skills necessary to fulfil their task.

Part II.

Schooling appropriate to the age and psychology of the pupils.

It is an established fact that pupils entering secondary school have widely differing social and cultural backgrounds. Secondary school must plan its curriculum and activities in such a way as to remove the ill effects of social conditioning, overcome the cultural hurdles, and ensure the best development of each and every one.

2) Individualising the learning process

Individualised learning ensures for pupils the real satisfaction of the right to study, a right bound up with the pupil's duty to work for his self-improvement and prepare himself to fulfil his obligations to society, that is to say to master the necessary cultural rudiments and develop his personal potential to the full.

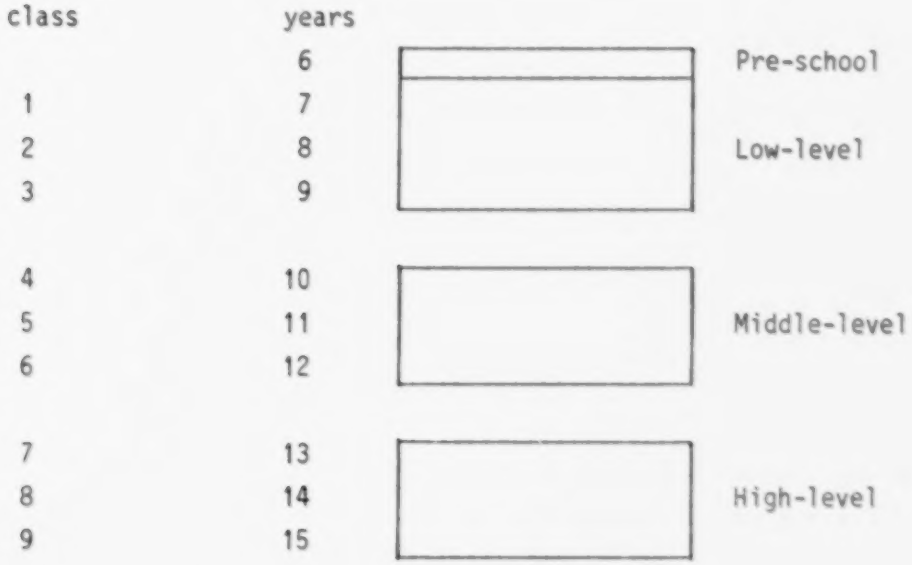
In this context particular problems arise from the presence of handicapped pupils who require- even when integrated according to the terms of the law into the ordinary classes -the closest regard for their different situation and the setting up of adequate educational and teaching facilities.

Specific measures in the field of school health care provisions, availability of particularly specialized teachers, socio-psycho-pedagogic services, the specific back-up provided for under Law N°.517 enacted in 1977 for handicapped pupils - are all the more important as handicapped pupils' difficulties are not resolved merely by entering the school; on the contrary, the fact of so doing can give rise to dangerous situations both for the handicapped pupils and for the other members of the classroom community. It is only through such measures that the school can provide a service which can match up to the delicacy of the situation.

Sweden — Hans Atterström

Some current changes in normal school in Sweden that will affect the role of remedial teachers and special educators

1. The compulsory school system in short :



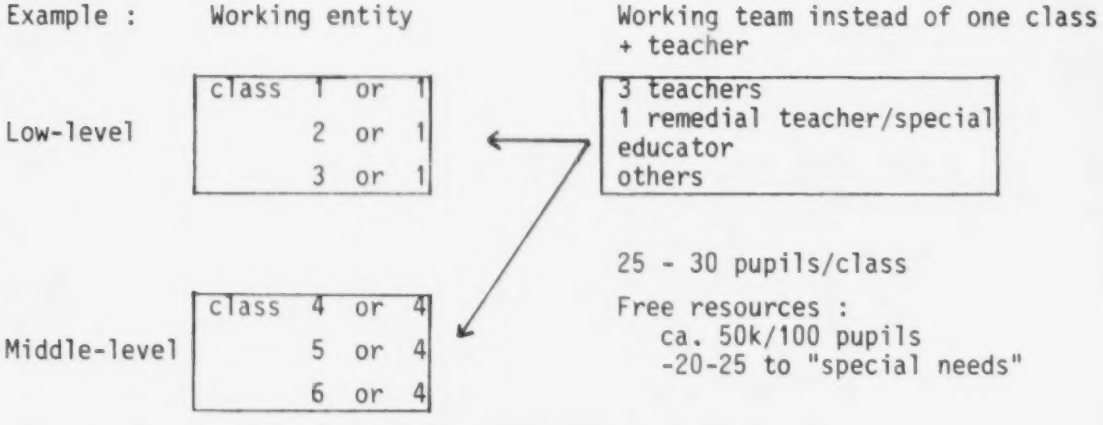
A new national curriculum for the 1980s

that focuses on
- children with special needs
- connection with society
- local responsibility

2. Some "special" aspects

- Children with special needs rather than special difficulties
- The help will be given under "normal circumstances" as far as possible
- No special classes but special - not permanent - grouping
- When difficulties arise, start out by trying to change means/methods of work in the class working entity e.g. better contact with parents, more group studies, etc.
- The qualitative aspects of integration. "The school's inner life" e.g. 90 % of mentally retarded are geographically integrated but are they genuinely integrated?

3. Organisational aspects



The curriculum stresses level-groupings.
local working plans in all schools

The roles of the remedial teacher/special educator :
- the organisational and leadership role
- the special teaching role in classes/entities.

4. Teacher training in "special education techniques" at three levels :

Basic training	10p See example
In-service training	10p + 10p +
Special educator Base level Specialized level	20p + 20p

SECTION 3
TEACHER TRAINING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom

Netherlands

Federal Republic of Germany

The Republic of Ireland

Northern Ireland

Italy

Norway

Sweden

Section 3 TEACHER TRAINING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom — *Marion Appleton*

In theory, special educators in England have obtained a basic teacher qualification, have worked within ordinary schools for at least two years, have obtained a post in a special school and have taken an advanced course of training after 3 to 5 years. In practice, in 1977 only 22 % of teachers working with handicapped pupils other than the blind or deaf held an advanced qualification. Moreover, using the Warnock Report estimate of 20 % of the total child population requiring special help, the proportion of specially qualified teachers working in special and ordinary schools was probably little more than 2 %.

In the last ten years there has been a rapid rise in the number of advanced courses in special education. Additionally some initial BEd courses offer a substantial element of special education particularly in the field of mental handicap. Traditionally, however, most special educators learn their skills "on the job" and since most special schools employ some specially trained staff who might help their colleagues, there is some degree of complacency about the dearth of specially trained staff in the field.

Approximately 18 % of children in need of special help are estimated to be in ordinary schools. The general trend towards integration may increase these numbers. The most pressing need is therefore to re-train substantial numbers of ordinary teachers to meet the needs of pupils who might otherwise drift into special schools or leave school at 16 barely literate.

Unfortunately, although teacher training institutions are beginning to offer diplomas for teachers in ordinary schools, most courses require full-time attendance for one year at a university, polytechnic or college of higher education. Few teachers can finance themselves because they would not only have to pay course fees but would be without an income. In the current economic climate the numbers of teachers receiving financial support from their employing authorities are severely limited. The trickle of trained teachers returning to the schools is reduced by those who subsequently move into management or into teacher training.

To exarcebate the problem, the rapid advance of knowledge concerning the diagnostic assessment of children and ways of meeting their needs through curri-

culum design and task analysis has been matched by rapid growth of technological resources so that teachers who received their special training even five years ago may no longer be specifically competent. Certainly the shift in emphasis from treating a handicap to catering for individual needs and from looking for a deficit in pupils to analysis of the educational environment is very recent.

In some countries initial teacher training can be combined with specialised training. The adoption of this practice in the United Kingdom would certainly increase the numbers of special teachers. However the Warnock Committee were unanimous in regarding initial specialisation as undesirable. Their proposal is that courses should be offered at different levels throughout a teacher's career. They argue that the teacher of a mixed-ability class of 30 pupils might have as many as six requiring special help at some time and four or five at any given time. All students in teacher training should therefore learn to recognise pupils in difficulty at an early stage, to seek the support of parents and professionals in order to meet the needs of their pupils and to recognise when the ordinary school is not equipped to give sufficient help.

Having through experience acquired practical teaching skills and some personal maturity, a variety of short courses should be available to them at local level in, for example, the development of language, reading or mathematical skills. Longer courses carrying a higher qualification should then be available to those who are drawn to special work. The privileged few who receive this opportunity should take some responsibility for the support and training of their colleagues. In this way it should be possible to ensure that every school has at least one specialist on the staff.

Admirable though this design might be, we are in a Catch 22 situation because until enough teachers receive special advanced training beyond Diplomas and in-service BEd to Masters or even Doctorates not enough staff can be found to man new courses in our highly academic institutions. Few institutions have a Special Education department of sufficient strength not only to provide the "special education element" but to convince their colleagues of the necessity to fit this into an existing BEd structure. Their interest in developing this "element" may be tempered by a shortage of man hours so that they are unable to contribute to short courses for local teachers.

The shortage of up-to-date lecturers is less marked in those institutions offering a Diploma or in-service BEd, especially where both full-time and part-time courses are mounted. However, the recent DES assessment of the work of part-time students as 0.15 of a full-time equivalent instead of 0.5 must discourage institutions from extending their work to satisfy local needs.

The Education Act 1980 requires all schools to publish an account of their policies and resources. The Education Act of 1981 requires them to make "statements" about the needs of pupils in their schools. Pressure will come from schools to seek help in the production of both policy documents and "statements" since they will be committing themselves to what amounts to a contract. The 1981 Act gives parents the right to question "statements" and interview those who contributed to them. It seems clear that our teacher training institutions are far from ready to respond to school needs in this field.

Netherlands

Jan Drapers
Peter Kropveld

The Netherlands has been witness to a very curious development over the years in the field of teacher training for special education. While special education itself has become very specialised with over twenty different types of special schools, the initial teacher training for special education is not specialised at all, up to this very day!

Initial teacher training in Holland is provided in training colleges. For primary education it takes three years for a student, after high school, to become a qualified teacher, also for special education there are other training colleges for secondary education teacher training, which are not discussed here.

What is done in the teacher training colleges for primary education? Over the past twenty years there has been little change on the whole in the programmes. Main subjects are educational philosophy and didactics, Dutch language and literature and cultural studies. Other subjects are psychology, sports, music, science and mathematics. Most time is spent on attending lectures. In the first two years about one day a week is spent in elementary schools so that students can become familiar with actual teaching situations.

In the third year more time is spent in schools, not only elementary schools, but also a period of some weeks in an infant school, a secondary school and a special school. When the student has completed these three years, he or she can work in any primary school, including special schools as stated earlier.

Present training for special education

The only training that is available for special education in the Netherlands nowadays, is an in-service part-time course, one night a week over two years. These part-time courses are organised by the Seminarium voor Orthopedagogiek in Zeist and the Katholieke Leergangen in Tilburg.

It is not necessary for teachers in special education to take such a course, but it is strongly recommended both by the Government, which subsidises the two institutes and partially defrays the expenses of the part-time students, and by the local educational boards.

The Seminarium voor Orthopedagogiek in Zeist organises its courses around the following blocks :

1. Identifying problems in the actual working situation of the student.

2. Exploring the school situation in special education regarding
   - teacher-teacher relations
   - teacher-child relations
   - teacher-scientist relations
   - teacher-parent relations

3. Educational philosophy regarding special education.

4. The concept of the problematic educational situation

5. Methods of therapy in the problematic educational situation.

Issues regarding aspects of these blocks are dealt with either in the form of lectures, to be delivered during the course, or as subjects for study in small groups of students. These small groups often meet on their own to prepare a paper, and this may be presented to the larger group as research findings.

During the past three years the Seminarium and the Katholieke Leergangen have taken an active part in a government committee on teacher training for special education.

The so-called Coso Report advised the government to organise a one-year full-time in-service training for experienced teachers. During this year they should come to college for 2 1/2 days a week and spend the other two days of the week in a special school as an extra teacher-in-training.

Due most probably to the economic recession the Report was put in cold storage a year ago, and has never been heard of since.

The Federal Republic of Germany — Karl-Josef Kluge

West Germany is a federal republic in which every state has the right to organise its own educational system and teacher-training programme. There are therefore considerable differences in teacher training throughout the German Federal Republic.

The focus of our information is the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen along the Dutch-Belgian border. Our member Karl-Josef Kluge, professor of education in Cologne, described the teacher training programme in detail.

Teacher training in the Federal Republic is conducted in universities since 1979, when the training colleges, the Pädagogische Hochschulen were integrated into the universities.

From the start of his studies the student may choose to study special education. This study lasts for six years (12 semesters) whereas the study for regular school teaching lasts three years (6 semesters). This study is equal from a quantitative point of view to a qualification in psychology or sociology, which means that the teacher will become as much an expert as the psychologist and the social worker, which opens good perspectives for multi-disciplinary work in special education later.

The first four years of his or her academic study are, according to Karl-Josef Kluge, rather theoretical and only after this stage are there two years of

practical work, which makes a total of six years of studies.

Karl-Josef Kluge has tried to overcome this problem in Vierssen, where he gives his students the opportunity to gain practical experience in the first stage of their study by working in his EREW institute, an advisory and research unit.

During the last two years of his or her studies, the student is what we could call a "candidate-teacher". She or he will then be working in a special school and is paid about one third of a teacher's salary. About 12 hours a week the "candidate-teacher" is working in a special school and 7 hours is spent at the university. For years this situation has been an ideal in the Netherlands.

In the Federal Republic there still is the problem of co-ordination between the theoretical and the practical parts of the studies of the candidate-teacher.

Many universities in Rheinland-Westfalen have not yet resolved their problem and students complain that the problems they meet in the field are very different from those they encountered in their academic programme. This is mainly didactically oriented whereas in the field they come across such problems as lack of educational support by the parents, lack of school motivation because of poor employment prospects in society now, interaction problems between teachers within their school or between teachers and other staff, etc.

Most universities in the Federal Republic are somewhat hierarchically organised, which does not make it too easy for the students to get teacher-training programmes changed.

The Republic of Ireland — Desmond Swan

It would seem that only one of the larger Colleges of Education here includes a course in special education as a separate element in its BEd programme, though this area has also figured in the Higher Diploma in Education course of at least one university college for some years now. Beyond this, however, at the in-service level, there is one highly selective, full-time course for primary teachers to qualify in special education, as well as two part-time and less intensive courses for the same sector - these being designated remedial. There

is besides, one selective, full-time training course for teachers of the deaf, which has long had a high rating internationally, and one smaller-scale selective training course for remedial teachers in post-primary schools. Predictably, it is the two full-time courses, catering for the smaller numbers, that are the most effective. Naturally this handful of courses is far from supplying countrywide needs in so diverse an area. It is inexplicable therefore that initiatives by educational institutions in providing further necessary courses have met with a refusal by the Department of Education to release teachers to follow them, though this may not be totally surprising in view of the virtual disappearance of in-service courses of any kind for teachers in recent years and the failure of the Department to work out and implement a policy in this area of teacher education, despite the lip-service frequently paid to it (cf. Department of Education, 1980, p. 87).

Northern Ireland

Because Northern Ireland has a small population (approximately 1 1/2 million) certain types of handicapping conditions exist in very small numbers. It would not be academically or economically practicable to provide courses leading to qualifications concerned with teaching in these areas of handicap so the Department of Education policy is to permit teachers to attend the relevant courses elsewhere. Included among these are courses for teachers of hearing-impaired children, visually-impaired children and maladjusted children. It is usual for such teachers to go to England, but many teachers of deaf children attend the course organised at University College, Dublin.

Italy — Anna Galli

As in several other EEC countries the teachers who in Italy work mostly as remedial teachers in regular schools and only rarely with severely handicapped children in special schools, are not obliged to acquire special training. So any teacher can work as a remedial teacher in Italy. On a voluntary basis, however, teachers may attend a two-year evening course.

From Anna Arfelli Galli we learned that these evening courses are held at several universities. They mostly consist of lectures in psychology, biology and philosophy and discussions about practical problems with problem-children in working groups.

Some courses are given for full-time students as well. It is not clear to us whether the teachers in the full-time courses are paid throughout or whether they have to quit their jobs and must try to find another one after the course has been completed. It seems to be very difficult to organise a practical course for teachers who come from so many different educational situations. The course in Montelparo appears to concentrate more on the theory than the practice of special education.

Present Organisation of the Course at Montelparo

- The subjects have been partially restructured and arranged in groups, according to area (biological, psychological, pedagogical and didactic).

- Studies are based on group work :
  1st year - reading groups with leaders chosen among the members
  - seminars (with discussion and reports)
  - discussion on verbal communication

  2nd year - study and research groups with leaders chosen from within the group
  - "intergroups" for the exchange of information, and periodical verification of the work
  - monthly supervision of the groups (by the teacher-trainers)

  Training - activity of observation and experience in ordinary schools
  - reflection in groups with external supervision (i.e. a teacher trainer)
  - interdisciplinary seminars about the various pathologies encountered during the training.

Brief comments on the preparation of teachers in Italy
(compulsory and secondary schooling)

It seems useful to start out by describing what kind of schools students must attend in Italy to become teachers, before embarking on any further training which is almost always necessary.

To become nursery school teachers, there is the "Scuola Magistrale" or teacher training college. This school, offering a three year course, was set up under the "Unified Law" on primary schools (1928) and the Royal Decree of 11th August 1933, N.1286. No specific programme is laid down, only the number of teaching hours and subjects are stipulated. The subjects that the students have to study are :

Italian language and literature, teaching techniques, history and geography, mathematics, bookkeeping and natural sciences, hygiene and child-care, religion, music and choral singing, domestic science, plastic artsand design. Teaching practice and training in teaching practice also form part of the course.

Up until 1968 only graduates from this school could teach in the nursery school; but thereafter a new provision (Law N°.444 of 18th March 1968) allowed students graduating from the "Istituto Magistrale" - Teachers' Institute - to work in the nursery school as well.

A very large proportion of teacher training colleges in our country are private, and the majority of them are Catholic institutions.

The school that prepares primary school teachers is the "Istituto Magistrale". The structure of this school dates back to 1923, while the practical teaching element was added twenty years later (1945-46).

Subjects and number of teaching hours per week

	I	II	III	IV
Religion	1	2	2	1
Italian language and literature	4	4	4	4
Latin language and literature	5	2	2	3
Foreign language	4	4	-	-
Philosophy and teaching techniques	-	3	3	4
Psychology	-	1	1	-
History and geography	4	4	4	3
Natural sciences and chemistry	3	3	3	3
Mathematics and physics	4	3	4	4
Design and history of art	2	2	2	2
Choral singing	1	1	1	1
Physical education	2	2	3	3
Musical instrument (optional)	2	2	2	2
	32	33	31	30

The students who have graduated from this school may continue their studies by enrolling in a special Faculty of the University (Magistero) or, after one more year of study, in any University faculty.

To become teachers in the secondary school a University degree is required. In Italy young people who have completed five years of higher secondary school may enter university.

It should be noted that graduates can obtain a permanent teaching post only through public competitive examination : in this way graduates cannot be in permanent contact with pupils before their preparation is tested in the public competitive examinations. In practice they may obtain temporary employment in schools as auxiliary teachers. But this kind of temporary occupation is also determined by a classification based on the graduation score and experience already gained in the school.

It is easy to see that a structure like this is based on an outmoded concept of the child's development and of teaching methodology. If we think that the younger the child is the less he can understand and learn, then we obviously do not need to prepare the teachers who are dealing with these children psychologically and pedagogically. When, on the other hand, we are aware of the importance of the first years of "secondary socialization" and of the learning possibilities of this age group, we can then demand an adequate preparation for nursery and primary school teachers.

Secondary school teachers have a University degree and, given the range of University study programmes, they have had a very wide choice of subjects for their training. It is indeed possible for students to acquire reasonable knowledge of subjects concerning their future work as teachers, but this knowledge can be only theoretical, as they completely lack teaching practice (a consequence, very likely, of the old division between thinking and doing, psiche and soma...).

Nevertheless the reform of the upper secondary school is now being discussed in our Parliament and new proposals in regard to teaching methodology will attempt to awaken our University from its theoretical slumbers! Of course these problems of training are fundamental for us as, in accordance with our legislation that provides for complete integration of handicapped pupils into the ordinary school, we do not need only special teachers for special pupils;

we need to equip all teachers with the didactic and theoretical skills to enable him to manage classes including handicapped pupils, i.e. pupils requiring the maximum educational effort from the teacher (an effort from which every pupil in the class will benefit, as experience with the Montessori method has shown).

In regard to in-service training the Presidential Decree of 1974, which introduced parent participation in school management, stipulated that 20 hours be set aside for teachers to be used for the various councils, meetings with parents and, principally, training.

The organization of these courses has been made the special responsibility of IRRSAE (Istituto Regionale di Ricerca, Sperimentazione e Aggiornamento educativo - Regional Institute of Research, Experimentation and Educational re-training) - Presidential Decree N°.419, 1974, Art. 7.9 - but, as IRRSAE is a newly established institution, for the time being it can meet teacher demands in only a few regions. Local authorities, teachers' councils, private organizations, trade unions, etc. attempt as best they can to provide some kind of training. The situation in Italy thus differs widely from region to region. In our region (Friuli-Venezia Giulia) IRRSAE is now collecting the training programmes of the different schools (for instance some schools ask for refresher courses on Italian language teaching, others on mathematics and so on) and organize them themselves, calling on the collaboration of University staff. This year they are also beginning to prepare their own programme, always in collaboration with the University,and putting forward these programmes to the schools, in order to obtain more coordinated and coherent teacher training. Thus, for the moment, the situation is very confused and not particularly satisfactorily : some courses are going well, others do not succeed in offering teachers the possibility of improved performance. Various proposals are currently under discussion which would allow some teachers to attend full-time courses of up to three years on normal pay.

For "support staff" special courses are organized by Universities, local bodies, private organizations; their programmes must be submitted to the central educational authority for approval.

It should also be said that preparation for public competitive examinations -

to become a permanent member of the teaching corps - compels (particularly today) new graduates and teachers working only temporarily in the school to pursue intensive, even if only theoretical, training. (They are now following courses organized for that purpose by IRRSAE, local authorities, trade unions, etc.

The educational and teaching curriculum

1) Meaning, aim and structures of programmes

The Class Council and every teacher must pay attention to every programme in every discipline, and virtually organize teaching programmes,in function of the criteria for curricular programming and in the light of the situation of the class and of each pupil.

2) The Class Council

The Class Council, being the competent body to coordinate the curricula for each discipline, plans and implements the educational and didactic programming. Law N°.517 changed to a considerable extent curriculum design, which up to then had been governed by Law N°.1859. The joint responsibility of the Councils (Class Council-Teachers' Council-Establisment Council) in their particular spheres of competence is emphasized at every stage of initiating, implementing, and checking all educational activities, including support and integration measures; specific times are stipulated for the activities' development; the Councils are expected to check, from time to time, the general operation of this programmed activity, with a view to further teaching and organizational improvements.

3) Programming stages

Organization along these lines requires an educational-didactic approach embodying the following steps :

a) identifying the needs of the pupils' socio-cultural starting situation;
b) defining the final, middle and immediate aims in the cognitive and non-cognitive areas and their mutual relationship;
c) organizing activities and contents in relation to the stated aims;
d) defining appropriate methods, both as regards materials and didactics;
e) observing the learning processes systematically;
f) evaluating processes aimed essentially at appropriate cultural and educational action and continuous monitoring of the programmed teaching;

g) continuous monitoring of the didactic process in order to collect information as to the goals attained which can be used in further intervention.

Planning cannot only impart flexibility but can serve to articulate the organization of the teaching activities (interdisciplinary activities, individualized tuition as well as interchanging groups and the utilization of specialized teachers in virtue of Law N°.517).

4) Integration and support measures

The Teachers' Council and the Establishment Council must pay particular attention to detecting the social needs of the community in which the school is situated, dealing with problems of specific cultural and social alienation and attempting to alleviate them in the context of lifelong education, provided by the District Council.

This view includes integration-oriented school activities, as well as interdisciplinary activities organized for groups of pupils of the same class or of different classes and the individualized support measures. The Teachers' Council on the basis of general guidelines drawn up by the Establishment Council and of the Class Council's suggestions, paying particular attention to the data resulting from the periodical checks, lays down the programme for such action, which must be correlated with the pre-set goals and undertaken within the terms of Law N°.577/77.

All pupils must take part in the integrative activities; in particular, it must be ensured that support-needing pupils do not work only on the supportive activities, while their class-mates are involved in the integrative ones.

5) Learning processes and the gradual ordering of experience and knowledge

The secondary school teaching is grafted on to the real developmental and preparational level reached in the primary school. For this purpose it is not enough to simply note the state of maturity and preparation of each pupil. The secondary school must manage its organization of teaching, in the light of the primary school's multidisciplinary approach, thus preparing a school situation where the pupil's learning and maturation processes would not have to suffer, specially at the crucial moment of entering a new institution with its false pressures and seemingly unnatural demands.

It will then be necessary to start the learning process by utilising an approach that allows a pupil to enjoy a wide variety of experiences that may stimulate his interest and therefore motivation to learn.

This does not mean that such tactics, though highly useful at the start of the learning process, should be adopted throughout the whole learning development; on the contrary it has more and more to be co-ordinated with the ordering processes that, working on and developing the knowledge already gained, may provide the pupil with capability in abstraction and synthesis, a firm basis for any further cultural conquest and a precondition for a free critical judgement and therefore for human dignity. Particularly the training in scientific methodology, that is one of the secondary school's main goals, is improved by proceeding from curiosity, easy understandable experiments should be made, where possible, by the pupil himself, helped through teaching to gradually develop abstracting and ordering abilities.

Norway Anne-Lise Arnesen

Implications for teacher training

The school reforms in basic education and new approaches to the treatment of the handicapped have enforced reforms in teacher training at all levels. The object of my paper is to present the principles of a new curriculum for special teacher training, now being prepared by a working group set up by the Council for Teacher Education in Norway.

Organising the curricula :
- Lecturing
- Do research
- Work independently.

Evaluation : Aims -> criteria -> evaluation.

Basic needs.:

The body of special education increasing considerably.
Minimum level of knowledge and skills.
Wholeness.
Continuity.
Adequacy.
Flexibility.

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Quantity and level of special education exceptional, but there are disputes about the effect of the special teacher with a traditional training in special teacher training.

A short outline of a one-year full time study of special teacher training in Norway (not yet formalized)

1) The principal basis of the special teacher training

1. Main characteristics

We have identified three main characteristics of Special Teacher Training as a particular field of studies :

1. A further development and deepening of knowledge, skills and attitudes from the initial teacher training in pedagogic techniques.
2. A conscious effort on behalf of pupils with learning problems.
3. A particular fund of knowledge developed by means of practical work with the handicapped and the disabled in different fields (psychology, pedagogy, sociology, criminology, medicine, etc.)

A unity of the three characteristic elements within a framework of a comprehensive study serves to legitimate special Teacher Training as a particular study.

2. The concept of handicap/disability

Every culture and society has its own definitions of what is normal and what is deviant, and its particular reactions to deviance.

The Special Teacher Training underlines the interaction and relationship between the individual and society. To be handicapped is not a static condition, but differs as to individual characteristics, particularly social and societal conditions, situations and phases of life.

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3. Other principles

a) Holistic and dynamic perspective according to an understanding of
   - the individual as a whole person
   - the individual as part of a society
   - learning and understanding may be based on meaning (wholeness)

   The emphasis will lie on the prevention of problems by means of personal resources (pupils, teachers, experts, family, neighbourhood, etc.)

b) Reform and innovation-oriented measures underlining the integration of handicapped innovation in individual schools, organisation, use of staff cooperation, materials-development, curriculum-development, etc.

c) Theory-practice

   Practice-oriented, meaning that the theoretical issues will be developed by defining problems relevant and realistic for practical work in school.

4. Didactics

1. Problem-oriented

   The study is organised in general themes to be further developed and defined by the students according to their earlier experiences and interests.

2. The content of the themes are put forth in terms of aims indicating what qualifications (attitudes, knowledge, skills) are sought as a result of the study.

   (These are based on an analysis of teacher qualifications needed for work with the wide variety of children in school).

3. Project-oriented

4. Active student participation at all levels of decision-making according to the organisation or content of the study.

2) Themes (one year of full-time study)

Themes 1 - 4 are supposed to be integrated in the initial teacher training. This means that those themes which already exist in the curricula for initial teacher education, have to be treated with more specific reference to the problems of handicapped children. This presupposes a developmental process in the years to come including in-service training of teachers at Teacher Training Colleges.

1. Co-operation problems and possibilities (1 week)
   a) pupils in the school, parents, experts from various spheres, colleagues, etc.
   b) in the institutions of study
      students, teachers, administration. The practical application of the co-operation principle is developed further through group work during the whole period of studies.

2. The school reforms : their intentions and implications (1 week).

3. The individual and society (4 weeks)
   Definition of deviance historically, the concepts of handicap and their function and use for different purposes and in different situations.

4. The organizing of the milieu for learning in school (10 weeks).

5. Financial, administrative and economical outlook for special education and other "support measures" for pupils in need of special help and support (4 weeks).

6. Different special educational approaches, underlying principles and practical consequences (10 weeks). This is combined with field-work and practical training in school (project-work).

7. Co-operation and counselling (2 weeks).

Sweden — Hans Atterström

A training system for special education in the training of class teachers

I. Background and rationale

Special pedagogical education at the level of basic teacher training started as an optional course in 1973. This course has since gone through various phases of development. At the University College in Jönköping this comparatively comprehensive course (for which the student gains ten points) must now be taken by all students training to be class teachers. This development provides an appropriate response to the recommendation that basic training in special education contained in the reports of the last two fact-finding committees be reinforced (SIA and LUT /4, /5) on reforming the Swedish school system.

The student teachers do special pedagogical training during the fourth term. Every session some seventy of them take part in the course, which besides periods of theory and application, comprises altogether three weeks of classroom teaching . Running accounts concerning the progress of the training have been given in a number of reports (1, 2, 3).

II. A short description of the system of training

The salient characteristics as regards the anchorage of the system and the object of the training may be briefly summed up as follows :

1. The importance of theoretical/ideological starting-points in special education approaches is being stressed.
2. The training takes as its starting point the broad definition of special education given e.g. in the report by the so-called LUT Fact-finding Committee (5, p. 278).
3. In accordance with the views advocated problems of integration are being dealt with from various aspects, i.e. with regard to
   a) pupils with special needs, b) systems (patterns) of working,
   c) subjects/syllabus, d) theory versus practice (see e.g. 6, and item 4 below).
4. Application is being stressed, application implying a real integration of theory and practice (see 6).
5. The aim of training is to broaden the range of the teacher's expertise rather than to inculcate narrow specialised skills.

The above items may be roughly schematised as follows :

- as regards the training as a whole :

Goal	Outlook	Objective	Practice in Remedial Training Methods
Equal education	Overall view	To give knowledge	Survey
Knowledge and Skills	Means orientation	and skills in Reme-	Measures
Training and Progress	Realistic connection	dial Teaching Methods	Evaluation

- as regards the growth of working models towards theme-oriented Remedial Training Methods

Working Models	Connected fields of subjects
Educational aid	Practical vocational guidance
Theme	Camp school
Free activities	Optional courses in Biology, Physics and Religion
	Optional subjects depending to the needs of the class

Educational aid and free activities are as far as possible linked to theme studies. The fields of study are connected with the course in Remedial Teaching Methods concentrated on themes in a way that the student teachers, the tutor and the pupils find suitable.

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The over-all planning of Special Education may be resumed in the following table.

Survey of the Course of Special Education resulting in 10 points.
Spring term 81.

Week

Practice Part (+)	Charting. Planning. Working Models. Evaluation.
Applied Part	Methods of Data Collection. Programme of measures. Reporting. Basics.
Section of Theory	Remedial teaching in theory and practice. Home and society. Mental health

Associated courses :

Practical vocational guidance; Syo
Camp school
Optional course

(+) Amounting to 3 weeks practical experience

SECTION 4
NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TEACHER TRAINING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom
Netherlands

Section 4 NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TEACHER TRAINING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

United Kingdom Fernando Diniz

Special Education in an initial teacher training course

One of the specific recommendations of the Warnock Committee was that there should be a special education element in all courses of initial/in-service teacher education courses. The objectives of this element would not be to train specialist teachers but to sensitise all teachers to the fact that a substantial number of their pupils may have special needs which would require modifications to the curriculum or learning environment.

The Warnock Report suggested that the aims of the special education 'element' should be :

1) to develop an awareness that all school teachers, whatever the age group of their pupils or level of their work, are likely to be concerned with helping some children who have special needs;
2) to enable teachers to recognise early signs of possible special educational need;
3) to give teachers knowledge of the part which they can play in the assessment of a child's educational needs and in the execution of any special measures prescribed;
4) to give teachers knowledge of what special education is like, together with knowledge of the range of various forms of special educational provision and of specialist advisory services;
5) to provide some acquaintance with special schools, classes and units;
6) to give teachers some understanding of how to communicate effectively with parents and an awareness of the importance of appreciating parents' anxieties and encouraging their continued involvement in their childs' progress; and
7) ABOVE ALL to give teachers knowledge in general terms of when and where to refer for special help. (Original emphasis).

In order to achieve these aims, it was suggested in paragraph 12.8 of the Report that, inter alia, teachers must develop practical skills in the observation of children, an appreciation of the educational needs of children with developmental difficulties - physical, sensory, emotional, behavioural or learning.

Although it was recognised as inappropriate and impractical for students to study specific disabilities in any depth, it was felt that there was a need for

some understanding of the practical steps necessary for meeting a child's special needs and an ability to adopt the attitudes most suited to dealing with his particular difficulties including the possible need for modification to school or classroom organisation, curriculum or teaching technique. Teachers should not be expected to provide specialist help themselves but they should be given an appreciation of the range of specialist services available.

In order to achieve these aims of understanding, skills and attitudes, a range of curriculum models suggest themselves for courses of initial training. At one hand of the spectrum there is the "permeation" model and at the other that of the "discrete component". We regard neither of these as entirely satisfactory. We do not feel that either is a comprehensive solution, but in the context of an initial training programme a balanced combination of the two strategies is the most effective means of achieving Warnock's aims.

The weakness of the "permeation" model is that there is no guarantee by the end of the course that the student, in his own mind, has been able to draw together the threads of this focus into a coherent picture. Conversely, once special education is included as a discrete element its relevance to other aspects of the curriculum may not be fully appreciated. I feel that a combination of both approaches is essential for a holistic appreciation of the concerns of special education.

I would aim to support the notion that all teachers should regard themselves, in some measure, as capable of responding to Special Educational Needs. Whilst recognising that the in-service training route is the main avenue to specialised provision, I believe that a not insignificant number of students in initial training have an aptitude for and interest in this field. We argue that in addition to a general awareness amongst all school staff, it is essential that every ordinary school should have a specialist member of staff to act as an advisor to his or her colleagues and as a consequence of this there should also be within every in-service B.Ed an option for specialised training.

At a very minimum the focus of the general special education "element" in an initial B.Ed for all teacher trainees should develop in these students an ability to identify problems and to recognise when their existing teaching skills are in themselves adequate to overcome such problems or when the alternative Stage I procedures identified by Warnock to overcome impediments to educational progress should be implemented. In addition I feel that students should be informed of

the different types of provision which will be required for children with special educational needs such as those listed in the Report which includes amongst others; full-time education in an ordinary class with adequate specialist support; education in a special class or unit with attendance at an ordinary class and full involvement in its community life; full-time education in a class or unit with social contact with the ordinary school; and full-time education in a residential special school with social contact with an ordinary school. Wherever possible opportunities for visits to schools and their supportive agencies should be part of the students' programme of studies and where such visits are impossible full use should be made of audio-visual material.

To achieve these aims it might be necessary to implement within training institutions an effective staff development programme for ALL staff teaching on initial training courses in order to ensure that they are able to focus on special education at least in the context of their particular curriculum subject.

Netherlands — Peter Kropveld

As in Italy and West Germany, the Dutch students in the part-time courses for special education felt their programme to be too theoretical and too far removed from their everyday reality in special education.

To respond to this need one of the two Dutch training institutes, the "Seminarium for Orthopedagogy" has developed a new curriculum in which the students get much more opportunity to develop their own programme.

What happens is that part of the curriculum is contributed by the lecturers, who give lectures about their own fields of experience (see Chapter 3) and part of the programme is handled in small study groups of three students at the most. These study groups present papers about a particular problem area in their field of work which are then discussed. The lecturer then acts more as a discussion leader.

From these and other discussions between students and lecturers, ideas emerge about particular subjects that merit further and more detailed study.

This development has led to the organisation of "optional courses". Apart from the normal studies, one evening a week the student can study "à la carte", this means that she or he can choose to attend a short course of 6 to 8 evenings about for instance drama for handicapped children or folkdancing in special schools, etc.

In this way every student can gear his curriculum in part to his own situation. At the moment, however, the position of the two specialised institutes in the Netherlands is threatened by the position of the training colleges for the mainstream schools. Due to the high unemployment rate among teachers in mainstream education, the training colleges have too few students and some of them are facing the prospect of having to close down.

In this situation, there is a policy bias against specialised institutes that serve the country at large in favour of local training colleges.

However, in the field of special education, it would not be regarded a change for the better if the local training colleges took over teacher training for special education. Much invaluable experience, including the new developments outlined above, could then be lost.

Once again there is the usual conflict between political reality and educational quality, the outcome of which is - in this case - highly uncertain.

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